

I imagine the newly discovered secret tapes,
the embarrassed NEA Chairman, the toppling
of the Presidency over WebbGate.

Wandering back to my own computer (the screen
filled with the safe words of the department
newsletter, the harmless figures of the Fall
semester's database), I wonder if I should tell
Charles about his impending fame, the notorious
references in future history books.

No, I won't say anything.
Let him be surprised.

— Glenn Bach

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A REFUSAL TO MOURN A BAD HAIRCUT

Physics assures us matter cannot be destroyed.
The sequoia crashing to the ground
becomes a field of toadstools leaping up.
The Thanksgiving feast Grandma slaved over
becomes a stink-pile, which becomes dinner again.

I'm sad that Shawn at Super Cuts lopped off
a half-foot of your hair, that scented river
where I loved to lay my head and drift. A hundred
brush-strokes a day for a full year — plus nightly
washing and papaya rinses — molds in the trash tonight.

But hair is protein. And flesh is protein too.
Six inches of protein have fallen, true.
Yet see the power of your naked beauty
to make an equal length of protein rise?
Lie down with me, sweet love, I give you back your hair.

WITH HEAD HELD HIGH

"It's not embarrassing. Somebody has to win; somebody
has to lose. I just happened to lose."

— New York Mets Pitcher Anthony Young, after
breaking the Major League record for con-
secutive losses.

Somebody has to get it up, somebody has to be flaccid;
I just happened to be flaccid.

Somebody has to have legs; somebody has to be a double amputee.

Somebody has to eat pheasant under glass; somebody has to eat crow.

Somebody has to get the girl; somebody has to get the pink slip, the eviction notice.

Somebody has to be President, grinning on the cover of Time; somebody has to be unshaven, gobbling free turkey at the Rescue Mission.

Somebody's son has to graduate summa cum laude, then ace medical school; somebody's has to drop out freshman year, and be arrested as the campus flasher.

Somebody has to rape his five-year-old daughter and go free; somebody has to marry a woman who, when they divorce, falsely accuses him of child molestation, and therapists ask the little girl leading questions, and Dad gets twenty years.

Somebody has to, on a lark, buy land in Utah, and Mobil finds oil on it; somebody has to buy a fixer-upper, work every weekend for a year sawing, sanding, roofing, painting, varnishing until, the week before he puts it on the market, gangbangers tag it, he screams "Cholo punks!" and that night they burn the house down, his insurance premium was lost in the mail, and the bank takes everything.

Somebody has to be Stephen King, with dozens of best-sellers and multi-million-dollar royalties; somebody has to be a minor regional poet with yearly sales of under 50, yearly earnings under 25.

It's not embarrassing.

ON THE EFFORTS TO OUTLAW SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND COLLEGE PROFESSORS

Many of the same people
who consider women capable
of flying fighter planes

in combat against men
who want to kill them,
consider them

defenseless
against the charms
of tweed.